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*Ordination to the Ministry, an entrusting
Men with the Gospel.*

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A
SERMON

Preach'd at the

ORDINATION

OF

THOMAS HADFIELD, M. D.

*At Peckham in the County of Surrey,
October xix, MDCCXXVI.*

By **JOSEPH HILL.**

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WITH

Dr. **HADFIELD's** Confession of
FAITH, and his Answers to the
Questions then propos'd to him by the
Reverend Mr. **JOHN BEAUMONT.**

To which is Added,
The **CHARGE** given by the Reverend
Mr. **THOMAS REYNOLDS.**

*Publish'd at the Request of several Ministers, and
others then present.*

L O N D O N:

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2 T I M. ii. 2.

And the things that thou hast heard of me, among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.



HIS second Epistle, to the Evangelist *Timothy*, was written but little before the death of the Apostle *Paul*, the time of whose departure out of this world was at hand when he wrote it, 2 *Tim.* iv. 6. And knowing, that he must shortly put off this Tabernacle, he endeavours, that after his decease *Timothy* might have those things in remembrance, that might both direct and encourage him in the Work whereto he had been called, and wherein he had been many years engaged. And this endeavour of the Apostle's was the more seasonable and necessary, not only on the account of his own approaching Death, which may reasonably be supposed to damp and dishearten *Timothy*, but also on account of the great degeneracy of the Professors of

Christianity ; yea and the general
 *2Tim.i.15. Apostacy of those in *Asia* *, where
Timothy is supposed to reside : For if *all* there
had turned away from the Apostle *Paul*, and
 had deserted and forsaken him, who had been
 eminently useful in preaching the Gospel, and
 spreading Christianity, it may well be presumed,
 that they had deserted the very Faith that the
 Apostle preached, and cast off the Authority
 of the Master whom he served : For if he
 who despiseth the Ministers of Christ despiseth
 Christ himself, surely he who deserteth, and
 turns away from the most faithful, painful,
 successful Apostle of our Lord and Saviour,
 does desert and turn away from Christ himself,
 whose Apostle and Embassador he is, and whom
 he had not only authorized, and made a
 Minister of the Gospel, but had publickly own'd,
 and that in every place, to which he went,
 preaching the Gospel. Now when *Paul* was
 deserted, *Timothy* could not but be discoura-
 ged ; but to animate him in his work, and en-
 courage him to go on, the Apostle does ex-
 hort him to stir up the gift of God that was
 in him, and to hold fast what was committed
 to him, and hold on in doing the work of
 an Evangelist, and fulfil his Ministry in such
 an evil day, when there was more need of
 the greatest diligence in both the parts of his
 Office ; which are, 1. a *Faithful Preaching*
 the Gospel himself, and, 2. a *Careful Commit-*
ting the Gospel to others : concerning the for-
 mer of which he gives several directions, in
 this,

this, as well as in the former Epistle ; but the words in the Text contain his advice or exhortation about the latter.

The words themselves are introduced with an earnest call to *Timothy*, to *be strong in the Grace, that is in Christ Jesus* ; well knowing, that in such a season as that was, without strength from Christ, he would have but little heart, either to preach the Gospel himself, or to set apart, and send forth others to call Men to believe, when many, who had made a fair profession of the Faith, were actually gone off from it.

In the words of the Text we have, I. *A Description of the Work of Ordination*, or setting Men apart to the Work of the Ministry : *St. Paul* sets it forth to be, a *Committing* to Persons *what Timothy had heard of him among many Witnesses*. II. We have the *Character of those who are to be ordained*, they must be *Faithful Men, who shall be able to teach others also*. I shall speak distinctly to each of these.

I. Here is the *Work of Ordaining Ministers* set forth to be a *Committing what Timothy had heard* from the Apostle before, or *among many Witnesses*. We cannot be at a loss to know what the Apostle means by the things that *Timothy* had heard from him, for he could hear nothing but what *Paul* preach'd ; and he preach'd nothing but Christ, 1 Cor. i. 23. *We preach Christ crucified* ; and Chap. ii. 2.

he says, *I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified.* It is then the Gospel, *the glad tidings of great Joy to all People*, even the good News of *a Saviour Christ the Lord*, Luke ii. 10, 11. It is the Gospel, that *Timothy* heard of *Paul*, for that was what he was *set apart to*, Rom. i. 1. and preaching this Gospel is the Work he was expressly, and especially sent about, 1 Cor. i. 17. *Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel*; that is, *baptizing* was not his only, or his principal Work, but he was especially *sent to open the eyes of the poor blind Gentiles, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God*, Acts xxvi. 17, 18. and this is done only by the *Preaching of the Gospel*, which is the means of calling Men out of Darkness into marvellous Light.

Let us therefore, in handling this Account of Ordination, particularly enquire, 1. What that Gospel is, that is committed to persons, when they are ordained. 2. What is that *Committing* of this Gospel, that is the principal business in Ordination.

1. What is the Gospel, that according to this admonition, or injunction of the Apostle, is to be committed to men, when they are solemnly set apart, to the work of the Ministry? It is here said to be that which *Timothy* heard from the Apostle's mouth, in the presence of many witnesses. It is what the Apostle did publicly preach, and therefore surely he could not

not be ashamed, or afraid of its being generally known; but, on the contrary, did earnestly desire, and industriously endeavour, that it might be published to the very ends of the Earth*, and preached to every Creature under Heaven†. This he preach'd in all places whithersoever he came, even *from Jerusalem, round about to Illyricum*, as he himself does in short describe his very long Journey ||.

*Acts xiii. 47.

† Col. i. 23.

|| Rom. xv. 19.

We can have no better way to know, what Gospel *Paul* preached, than to attend to the Account that is given of it, either by himself in *his Epistles*, or by his Companion *St. Luke*, in the *Acts of the Apostles*: And they both give us such an account of the matter, that we clearly see it was what Christ charged the eleven, after his Resurrection from the dead (and therefore not long before his Ascending up into Heaven) to preach to all Mankind: See only the Evangelist *Mark's* account of this matter, Chap. xvi. 15, 16. Christ said to the Eleven, *Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature: He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; and he that believeth not, shall be damned.* This was what Christ commanded to be preached by all his Apostles, and this is what we are fully assured was carefully and constantly preached by *Paul*, as much, yea more, than by any other Apostle, both in publick and private, to smaller or greater numbers, as

as he had opportunity ; to the *Jews*, as long as they would hear him, and afterward to the *Gentiles*, as long as he lived. He labour'd more abundantly than all the other Apostles, and all to set forth the Lord Jesus Christ, as the only Person fit to be believed in, and the only one that Sinners may safely apply to for Salvation. He, when in prison at *Philippi*, tells his cruel Jailer, who had treated him most barbarously, that if he would *believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, he should be saved*, Acts xvi. 31. And all his preaching, in all places, was to bring Men to true Faith in Christ, which is always accompanied with true Repentance, and does always produce new Obedience.

The Apostle's Speech to the Elders of the Church at *Ephesus*, which is recorded by *Luke*, Acts xx. 18, and following Verses, sufficiently sets forth the matter, as well as the manner of the Apostle's preaching ; he saith to them, v. 20. *I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, Repentance toward God, and Faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ* ; and afterwards, v. 26, 27. he solemnly appeals to them, *Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men, for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God*. And if to this account of his *constant Practice* at *Ephesus*, we add what he declares to be his *fixed Purpose* at *Corinth*, 1 Epist. ii. 2. where he saith, *I determined not to know any thing among you, save*
Jesus

Jesus Christ and him crucified; we shall clearly see, not only in the general, that it was the *Gospel* that *Paul* preached, but also that it was the *whole Gospel*, and *nothing but the Gospel*.

(1.) It was the *Gospel*, or the way to everlasting Blessedness, by the *second Adam*, according to the Covenant of Grace; which is vastly different from the Law, or the way to everlasting Blessedness by the *first Adam*, according to the Covenant of Works. How distant and different the Covenant of Works, and the Covenant of Grace, are from each other, the Apostle sets forth in many places of several of his Epistles; particularly, those to the *Romans* and *Galatians*, whence we may argue an utter inconsistency, and direct contrariety between being justified by the Law and the Gospel, which is often called *Grace*, because the principal thing, treated of in the Gospel, is the Grace of God.

(2.) It is *the whole Gospel, all the Counsel of God*, whose infinite Wisdom contrived the Covenant of Grace, and whose exact Justice and boundless Mercy approved of it, and were both of them entirely pleased and satisfied with it, that this should be the way of delivering sinful Men from endless Misery, and bringing them to everlasting Blessedness; even by his own eternal Son, who is the Author of eternal Salvation to all them that obey him: God himself having *set him forth to be a Propitiation for Sin, through Faith, in his Blood,*

Blood, to declare his Righteousness for the remission of Sins, Rom. iii. 25. This Jesus, which is the only name under Heaven, given among Men, by whom we must be saved (as Peter tells us, Acts iv. 12.) the Apostle of the Gentiles sets forth to be over all God blessed for ever, Rom. ix. 5. and the only Mediator between God and Man, 1 Tim. ii. 5. and able to save to the uttermost all who come to God by him, Hebr. vii. 25. being a Prophet like to Moses, and a Priest after the Order of Melchisedec, and a King, who cometh in the name of the Lord; whom our Apostle proclaimeth to be the blessed and only Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, 1 Tim. vi. 15. It is not to be supposed, but that in all Places, to which he came, he made the same Proclamation of Pardon, that he did at Antioch in Pisidia, where he cries out in his Sermon, Acts xiii. 38, 39. Be it known unto you, that through this man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins, and by him all who believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the Law of Moses. And all who are justified by Faith in Christ, without the Deeds of the Law, are sanctified by the same Faith, Acts xv. 9. xxvi. 18. He being made of God to all that are by Faith united to him, and interested in him, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption, 1 Cor. i. 30. In a word, all the Doctrines that are to be believed, and all the Duties,
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that are to be performed, and all the *Ordinances* that are to be administred, and all the *Officers* that are to be employed, and all the *Discipline* that is to be exercised in the Christian Church, are made known to us by the Apostle, who *kept back nothing that was profitable*, Acts xx. 20.

3. It is *nothing but the Gospel*. What our Apostle preached is as *Peter* calls it, 1 Pet. ii. 2. *the sincere Milk of the Word*, ἀδόλον γάλα, not at all adulterated, or diluted. He does not mingle our own good Works with the Righteousness of Christ, nor join our Obedience with his, in our Justification, as that for which we are accounted righteous in the sight of God, who is the Judge of all the Earth, who cannot but do right, and is *Just*, even when *he justifieth him who believeth in Jesus*, Rom. iii. 26. It is only *in Christ*, who was made Sin for us, that we are made the Righteousness of God, 2 Cor. v. 21. By the deeds of the Law no flesh shall be justified in the sight of God, Rom. iii. 20. though without the deeds of the Law, no Man is, or ought to be justified in the sight of Man. If Men are to judge us, we cannot be justified only by our Faith, which is in the Heart (and therefore out of their sight) but with them, we must be *justified by Works, and not by Faith only*, Jam. ii. 24. And the Apostle *Paul*, who does zealously exclude the Obedience of Christians from having any hand in procuring the pardon of our Sins, and a

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right and title to everlasting Blessedness, or being any part of the Righteousness, for which we are justified in the sight of God, does as zealously press and exhort them to a most exact obedience to the Law, and to mind *whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report*, Philip. iv. 8. and not only to *render to all their dues*, Rom. xiii. 7. but expressly declares, Tit. ii. 11, 12. that *the Grace of God, i. e. the Gospel of Christ, which bringeth Salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.* Wherever the Gospel does not only reveal and offer, but really bring salvation, men are effectually taught, and actually engaged by it, to eschew evil and do good, to forsake sin and work righteousness, to abandon all impiety and exercise themselves unto godliness, and that in so very eminent and observable a manner, that the Gospel itself, which is the instrument or means of this is thereby adorned. The Gospel which Paul preached was a *Doctrine according to godliness*, 1 Tim. vi. 3. and let none dare to imagine that the Apostle does any thing contrary to his own caution against *corruptness in Doctrine*, Tit. ii. 7. when he does in the 8th Verse of the 3d Chapter, say to Titus, *This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they who have believed in God might be careful to maintain*

maintain (i. e. according to some, to support the honour, and raise the credit of) *good works*. *These things are good and profitable unto men*: And such things only our Apostle did teach and exhort, avoiding not only any thing that was hurtful and pernicious, but every thing that was unprofitable and vain.

Now this Gospel, which St. *Paul* preached, *Timothy* is said, in our Text, to have heard, *among many Witnesses*; by which expression the Apostle may be thought to design the exciting *Timothy* to greater diligence and care, or the animating him with greater courage and boldness, in committing the Gospel to others; for all those many Witnesses heard and approved what the Apostle had spoken, and knew also that *Timothy* had been acquainted and entrusted with the same. But who these Witnesses are, is not unanimously agreed by expositors; some think we should read it *by many Witnesses*, and then they suppose, that the Apostle, by the many Witnesses here spoken of, must mean either, 1. the *many Miracles*, that he was empowered to work, for the confirmation of the Doctrine which he taught, or rather, 2. the *many Ministers* whom *Timothy* had heard preach in several Places; peradventure some of the other Apostles, and also many of the five hundred Brethren who had seen Christ, after he was risen from the dead, and that at one and the same time, and therefore were all of them unexceptionable Witnesses of Christ's resurrection. And it may be presumed,

that most, if not all of them, did preach that *Jesus, who was delivered for our Offences, and was raised again for our Ju-*
 *Rom. iv. 25. *stification* *; they having been admitted to see Christ after his Resurrection from the dead, which the Apostle tells us, *Rom. viii. 34.* has a peculiar influence on the justification of all that believe.

There are others who think, that the many Witnesses, among whom *Timothy* heard the Gospel, are those who were the Apostles hearers, at the same times and places that *Timothy* attended on *Paul's* preaching: But some suppose, that in the Primitive, Apostolical Age, as well as in later times, when Men were ordained to preach the Gospel, especially if an Apostle was present, and presided in the Presbytery, the several principal Articles of our Christian Faith, and the fundamental Doctrines of the Gospel, were propounded by the President, and the Person to be ordained did answer in the affirmative, when he was ask'd whether he believed it: And these think that the whole Assembly that were present at *Timothy's* Ordination, and heard him declare his belief of the Doctrines, which the Apostle then mentioned, are *the many Witnesses* that are intended in our Text; and this receives some confirmation or countenance from 1 Tim. vi. 12. where the Apostle tells *Timothy*, that he had *professed a good profession before many witnesses*: for inasmuch as it is not easy to suppose, that these words refer to

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the confession of Faith that *Timothy* made at his Baptism, for Acts xvi. 1. intimates, that he was a *Disciple*, and therefore also baptized, before the Apostle had any knowledge of him; and if so, then we may be led more easily to believe, that the good profession, in the presence of many Witnesses, was made at his Ordination, to the useful, and at that time very necessary office of an *Evangelist*.

2. What is the *Committing the Gospel* to others, which is here intended by the Apostle in this charge to *Timothy*? There is a twofold committing of the Gospel to others, which are both of them the work and duty of the Ministers of Christ, and which are also both of them very properly expressed by the * *Greek Word* that is here * *παράσπον*. made use of in the Text.

(1.) There is a *delivering the word of God*, and a declaring the mind of God to any, who are met together to hear for their own personal instruction and improvement: this is what the Ministers of Christ do, whenever they preach the Gospel; for those who are Pastours of Christ's Flock, according to his heart, do feed the people with knowledge and understanding, and their preaching to the Flock is a setting before them what is proper food for their spiritual nourishment, that they grow and improve in knowledge and grace, in wisdom and strength, for performing all the duties of Christianity, and encountring all the difficulties,

ties, and withstanding all the enemies that a Christian is liable to meet with. And thus the original word must be understood, when we meet with it in several places of the New Testament, particularly *Mark* viii. 6, 7. in which two Verses this word occurs three times, and is always very fitly and properly rendered *setting food before Men*. And if we take the word in this sense, it does not unaptly describe the preaching of the Gospel, which is one principal part of a Minister's work, and should be so managed, that the people may take in the truths delivered to them, so as by them to be nourish'd in every part of the new Creature, to grow in all the graces of the Spirit, and to abound more and more in every good word and work.

(2.) There is *a delivering the Gospel* unto some men *in order to their teaching* and instructing *others*, by preaching it unto them, that they may be thereby brought to know and believe, and love, and obey it, that they may be saved by it. This is the committing the word of God, that is here especially intended; in this sense the word is used in other places in the New Testament, particularly when it is render'd by the word *Commend*, as it is, *Acts* xx. 32. where the Apostle says, *I commend you to God, &c.* where we must understand him to mean the putting them into the hand of God, to be, in an especial manner, cared for, protected, preserved, and guided by him as his peculiar charge. Thus is the Gospel committed

ted to Men, when they are separated and set apart to the work of the Ministry: the Gospel is committed to them as a *trust*. Thus the Apostle tells us, 1 Tim. i. 11. *the glorious Gospel of the blessed God was committed to his trust*: And he charges *Timothy*, 1 Tim. vi. 20. *to keep that which was committed to his trust*. And so every Minister is, at his Ordination, entrusted with the whole Gospel, to take the greatest care of the Doctrines, Duties, and Ordinances thereof.

[1.] The *Doctrines of the Gospel* are committed to his trust. These he is to open and explain to others, as far as the Scripture does unfold to him, the great Truths that are laid down in the word of God. A great deal of care and pains must be taken in searching the Scriptures, in order to a right understanding, and explaining the Doctrines there taught; but he must also take care not to *endeavour*, yea (and as * one learned Man expresses it) not to *desire* to be wise above what is written; but to set forth in order what is contained in the Scriptures. He is likewise to evince the truth of those Doctrines, proving out of the divinely inspired writings, that these things are true, and therefore must be believed. And his care of the Doctrines of that Gospel which is committed to him, must extend to the maintaining and defending them against the violent

* Nescire velle, quæ magister maximus docere non vult, est erudita inscitia. Scaliger.

and universal opposition, that Doctrines which are according to godliness, cannot but meet with in an ungodly world. What the Jews said to *Paul*, Acts xxviii. 22. *Christianity is every where spoken against*, might with truth be said in every succeeding generation. There have been despisers, opposers and gainfayers of the Gospel in every age ; and answers must be fetch'd out of the word of God to the many objections of Men, who oppose the Truth which *Ministers are set to defend*, Philip. i. 17. endeavouring to convince gainfayers, and to silence the ignorance of foolish Men. And inasmuch as Men who will be saved, must receive not only the light, but *the love of the Truth*, 2 Thess. ii. 10. a Minister must endeavour to bring Men to be suitably affected with the Doctrines of the Gospel, and not only to believe them as true, but also to love them as good. And seeing *Truth* is not only to be known, believed and loved, but also to be *done*, according to John iii. 21. and our Saviour saith, John xiii. 17. *If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them* ; it must be the endeavour of a Minister to make such application of the Truths of the Gospel, that their hearers may be doers of the Word, that their lives may be influenced by what they know, and believe, of the important Doctrines of the Gospel.

[2.] *The Duties* of the Gospel are what Ministers are to be very careful about ; as *Christians* they themselves are bound to the steady, regular,

regular, exemplary performance thereof in their own private capacity ; but as *Ministers*, they are to take particular care, that those over whom they are set, should have their conversation as becomes the Gospel of Christ, which teacheth Men sobriety, righteousness and godliness, and calleth us to walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, providing things honest in the sight of all Men ; departing from iniquity, abstaining from all appearance of evil, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh, fleeing all worldly lusts, and following after righteousness, faith, charity, peace with them who call on the Lord out of a pure heart ; resisting the flesh, world, and devil, fighting the good fight of Faith, and serving the Lord from a principle of love, and without slavish fear, in holiness and righteousness before him.

These and all the other parts and branches of practical Christianity, mentioned in the Gospel, are committed to Ministers, to take care that their people be instructed in the nature, persuaded of the necessity, and engaged in the practice of them, and that with the freedom and delight which are agreeable to the Gospel, or New-Testament dispensation ; and on such motives, and for such uses, and with such views as the Gospel does direct, designing the pleasing and glorifying of their heavenly Father, the adorning the Doctrine of Christ their Saviour, and their own advancement in holiness, wherein lies the meetness to be par-

takers of the incorruptible, undefiled inheritance.

(3.) The *Ordinances of the Gospel* are committed to Ministers at their Ordination. The preaching of the Word, the administering of the Sacraments of the New-Testament, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the exercise of the government of the Church, which our Lord Jesus Christ, the Head and King of the Church, hath instituted, are put into their hands; and in all these they are to act according to the Authority that they have received, and by the Rules, that are prescribed for edification, and not for destruction. They must instruct the ignorant, excite the indolent, and rebuke the disobedient, and that *with all Authority*, Tit. ii. 15. They are carefully and conscientiously to preach, rightly dividing the word of God, giving to every one that part or portion, which does of right belong to them; and proceed according to the Gospel-rule in their admission to, and administration of the Sacraments, carefully observing how, and to whom they apply the Seals of the Covenant of Grace; and fixedly regarding the Honour of Christ and the Salvation of Souls in all Church-Censures, which are for the reclaiming those that wander out of the way of Holiness, and the deterring of others from the like deviations; and the restoring, preserving and promoting that Piety and Purity which ought always to be in the Church of Christ.

II. The second thing contained in the Text is, The Character of the Persons who are to be ordained; they must be *Faithful Men, who shall be able to teach others*; it is only to such that the Apostle allows and directs the Gospel to be committed as a Trust. Two things are here mentioned, as very necessary qualifications of those, who are ordained or set apart to be Ministers of the Gospel; 1. They must be Faithful; 2. They must be able to teach others.

1. They must be *Faithful*, which contains two things in it, (1.) That they themselves *believe the Gospel* that they are to preach to others, (2.) That they are *persons of truth and fidelity, uprightness and honesty* in their dispensing the Gospel. Both these senses the original word *πιστος* does unquestionably contain, and both are certainly intended in those places where *Paul* *, *Timothy* †, *Tychicus* ‖, and *Epaphras* ‖†, are said to be faithful Ministers.

* 1 Tim. i. 12.

† 1 Cor. iv. 17.

‖ Eph. vi. 21.

‖† Coloss. i. 7.

(1.) *They must believe the Gospel themselves*, and that not only with what is sometimes called a dogmatical Faith, which goes no farther than a Man's bearing in hand, or being of opinion that the Gospel is true, and believing it no otherwise than we do any other history, that we judge to be true, and not a mere Fable or Romance; but also with a Faith that is of the operation of God, a realizing Faith, which is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things

not seen : such persons are thoroughly persuaded of the truth of the whole Gospel, and with the whole Heart and Soul believe it. This Faith does influence their inward affections and outward actions, and works by Love, so as that they live by Faith, and walk by Faith, acting so as others cannot but see, the things revealed in the Scriptures are the greatest realities in their account, and do, with them, outweigh all the things that are seen.

The former of these, though very different from, and vastly short of the latter, cannot be where there is not a knowledge and understanding of what is contained in the Gospel. Men cannot believe what they are ignorant of : And this knowledge being absolutely necessary in order to Faith, and what upon strict enquiry, we may come to a greater certainty of, because it cannot be counterfeited, as Faith too easily and too often is, may be more narrowly searched into, and where competent knowledge is discerned, and a sincere Faith professed, and where there is nothing in the Life and Conversation that does contradict and confute, or give the lye to that Profession, there persons are to be accounted faithful by men, who cannot certainly discern things so inward and invisible as Faith is.

Indeed, Faith not only *Historical*, but *Saving*, is very necessary for a Minister, who is set apart to the Gospel of God, and who is, with the greatest sincerity and earnestness, to endeavour, in the execution of his office,

to persuade men so to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, as that they may be saved ; and they who are themselves wise to Salvation, are most sincere, and, in all likelihood, will be most successful in endeavouring to turn the disobedient to the wisdom of the just : yet as there are, in our day especially, but few that are savingly converted, though they sit under the Ministry of those who cannot but be thought to believe to the salvation of their own Souls ; so we cannot but hope, that those, who are themselves in a state of unregeneracy, may by the Sermons they preach, convert Sinners, as they do by the Sacraments they administer, edify Believers ; God being absolutely at liberty to use what instruments he pleaseth ; though it is not to be supposed, he will often, if at all, raise men in this life to the honour of turning sinners to Righteousness, who shall themselves, in the next, be raised to shame and everlasting contempt. But whatever may be supposed or hoped of those Ministers, who have a right notion of the way of Salvation by Christ, and do shew it to others, though they do not walk in it themselves ; the Apostle seems to intimate, *2 Tim. iii. 8, 9. that men of corrupt minds, and reprobate concerning the Faith*, that is, as the margin renders it, men of no judgment, scandalously ignorant, or grossly erroneous, as to the faith of the Gospel, will never do any good in the Church. They who know not the way to Life themselves, cannot possibly shew it to others ;

thers ; and they who shew men a wrong way, will never thereby bring them to the right.

Were it necessary to add any thing more, to prove the necessity of a right understanding of the Gospel of Christ, and the way to Heaven in Ministers, we might consider what God saith by the Prophet *Jeremy*, concerning the preachers of that day, *Jer. xxiii. 22. If they had stood in my Counsel, and had caused my people to hear my words, then they should have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings.* The counsel of God must be stood in and insisted on, if ever sinners are effectually converted ; and how this can be done by those who do not at all believe, or rightly understand this Counsel, is not easy to be conceived. It is therefore requisite that Ministers should be faithful or believing, how else can they stand in this counsel of God ? If they do not believe what they preach, though what they preach is true in itself, it is a lye as it comes out of their mouths ; these unbelieving preachers turn the truth of God into a lye, as every unbeliever makes God a lyar, *1 John v. 10.*

(2.) They must be *Faithful*, or *Just* and *Honest* ; they must be men of integrity and uprightness, and that especially and eminently in the several parts of the ministerial office. *The Ministers of Christ are stewards of the mysteries of God, and it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful ; 1 Cor. iv. 1, 2.*

If

If the common ordinary servants of men are in their places to *shew all good fidelity, that they may adorn the Doctrine of God our Saviour*, Tit. ii. 10. much more must the Servants of Christ shew all good fidelity, in all the parts of their Ministry. They must be faithful to their Lord and Master, in advancing his Honour, and enlarging his Kingdom, and faithful to precious and immortal Souls, in promoting their conversion and salvation. And they are so,

[1.] *When they employ all their talents in their master's business.* We think the time and strength of our servants are not theirs but ours, to be employed and spent in our service, whenever we have any thing for them to do: And has not Christ as much a propriety in his servants, especially his Ministers in the strictest sense? Those of them, therefore, who would approve themselves to be faithful, must employ all their health and strength, and gifts, and parts, and learning, and time in their Master's service, whenever he calls for them. They are set apart for this service, and must give themselves wholly to it, using every thing they have, in the work to which they are called. In the service of Christ we are to take more especial care not to be slothful, but fervent in spirit, doing with our might, what our hand findeth to do for our Master. A slothful servant can never be accounted a faithful one, but is pronounced *wicked, because slothful*, Matth. xxv. 26.

[2.] *When*

[2.] *When they do the whole of their Master's will.* They must fulfil their Ministry, Coloss. iv. 17. following the Lord fully, as Caleb is said to have done, Numb. xiv. 24. They must be careful to do all that is incumbent on them; having the whole Gospel of Christ committed to them, and being empower'd to administer all the Ordinances thereof. He is a faithful Christian who conscientiously observes all the commands Christ hath laid on him; so he is a faithful Minister, who hath a due respect to all those precepts and injunctions that are especially directed to those who are in the Ministry, regulating himself in his administering all the Ordinances of the Gospel, according to the mind of Christ, neither admitting any whom he ought to keep back, nor rejecting any whom he ought to admit. But inasmuch as Preaching is a principal part of the Minister's work, we particularly add in the next place,

[3.] *When they shew the whole counsel of God, teaching men to observe all things, whatsoever Christ has commanded*.* The Apostle saith,

* Matt. xxviii. 20. *he kept back nothing that was profitable,* Acts xx. 20. They must not insist only on things that are less displeasing, and forbear any that are more irksome or offensive to a carnal mind, and corrupt inclination. There is a great deal of self-denial runs through the whole Gospel. A man cannot believe many of the Doctrines of the Gospel, if he will gratify,

tify, and give scope to his own fancy and imagination, and bring every thing to his corrupt reason, to be examined and censured there. And the whole of practical Christianity is directly contrary to Man's natural inclination; so that if a *Minister* in his preaching be principally solicitous to *please men*, *he cannot be a faithful servant of Christ*, Galat. i. 10. A faithful Minister calls Men to repent of their Sins, and to believe in Christ, to renounce all righteousness of their own, and rest only on the righteousness of another, as the meritorious cause of pardon of Sin, and a title to Heaven. And faithfulness in preaching the Gospel does eminently appear in asserting and evincing those truths, that are especially denied, opposed, or doubted of in those times and places where a Minister lives, and by those persons among whom he labours; and also in reproving the Sins that are committed, and pressing the Duties that are neglected, where he is more immediately concerned. Thus did the Apostle *Paul* shew his faithfulness, as plainly appears by several of his Epistles.

I might add further, under this part of a Minister's character, how he deals with particular persons, according to their several necessities and capacities; but I proceed to the other part of the Character laid down in the Text.

2. *They must be able to teach others also.* This is expressed 1 *Tim.* iii. 2. and also in the 14th Verse of the Chapter where our Text is,

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by

by a Bishop's, or Minister's being *apt to teach*, which contains in it several things, which I shall only just mention.

(1.) *A clear understanding* of the Doctrines and Duties he is to teach, and the place and order in which they stand : for if he is confused or cloudy in his own notions of them, he cannot be able or apt to teach others.

(2.) *An instructive persuasive way* of handling the Word of God, that he may inform the judgment, and convince the conscience, and move the affections.

(3.) A prudent adapting his method and manner of preaching to the matter he insisteth upon, and to the people he preacheth to.

(4.) An ability to express himself in such words, as may convey his true sense and meaning, without difficulty, to the understanding of the hearers.

Now as this ability, or aptness to teach others, is to be acquired and improved by exercise, you may observe the Apostle, in our Text, mentions it as a qualification which some candidates for the Ministry might not as yet have attained, in all the parts of it, in a very considerable degree : for he speaks of it as what is yet to be gotten, when he says, *who shall be able to teach others* ; which intimates (what may very well be supposed) that in those early days of Christianity, men had not those advantages of education, nor did preach so long, as Probationers, as they generally

rally do among us, and in other reformed Churches, before they are ordained. And therefore, if there was but a probable prospect, and sufficient ground to believe they would in time attain to that ability, or aptness to teach, they might be set apart to the work of the Ministry; but by the method observed among us, we are enabled to go upon surer ground.

And thus I have finished what I intended to say in dividing and opening this portion of Scripture, and shall now proceed to make some Reflections on what has been delivered,

If the Gospel is what men are entrusted with, and what is committed to them, when they are solemnly set apart to the Ministry, we may hence infer,

[1.] *The great worth and excellency of the Gospel.* Were it not of extraordinary value, it would be very absurd and foolish to commit it to the peculiar care of particular Persons, faithful and able, who are separated to this very work, with the solemnity and seriousness, that is and ought to be observed in setting men apart to this sacred Ministry. The counsel and contrivance of the holy God, for the salvation and blessedness of sinful Man, is most admired and esteemed, where it is best understood and believed. How precious are all those thoughts of God concerning vile

Man, which are made known to us by the Gospel of his dear Son, who is there set forth to be *the Author of eternal salvation to all them who obey him?* And who can enough esteem, and extol the Mercy, Grace, and Love of God, in the salvation of any sinners at all, or the Wisdom, Power and Holiness, yea and the Justice too, that are gloriously manifested in saving them this way? That ever the unchangeably holy, and righteous God should shew any compassion, or send any relief at all to guilty, polluted creatures, who naturally delight, and employ themselves in Sin, which is the abominable thing that the Lord does hate; this ought to be taken notice of with wonder and thankfulness: But that he should provide such a salvation for them, not only pardoning multitudes, whose crimes are very heinous, as well as very numerous, and saving them from the bitter pains of eternal death, but also taking them into his favour, which is the best and sweetest life; this is more astonishing, and more to be admired. But to save sinners by such a way as the Gospel sets forth, even by his own eternal Son, is the wonder and amazement of the bright and glorious Angels, and what *they desire to look into* *. Surely then this ought to be most highly admired and esteemed by us, as that wherein God is most eminently glorified, and men are most effectually saved; for our Redeemer and Saviour, on whom God has laid help, is *The Mighty one,*

* 1 Pet. i. 12.

one*, yea the mighty God†, the true God‡, and over all God blessed for ever §§; and therefore, being made under the Law, has magnified it, and made it honourable**, yielding a perfect obedience to it, which no Man else ever did. He has by humbling himself, and becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross, made satisfaction to the justice of God, and brought in an everlasting righteousness for the justification of Man. Who can shew forth the excellency of this only way of saving sinners by Jesus Christ? With respect to this, we who enjoy the Gospel, must say, not only, that *there is none like it*, but *there is none besides it*. It is only the Blood of the Son of God, when presented by him to the Father, that does fully satisfy Divine Justice, which was highly provoked; and the same Blood, when applied to the souls of men, by the Holy Ghost, does sanctify and cleanse them from all those sins, with which they were dreadfully polluted. And who can, without admiring the wisdom and grace of God, contemplate the appointing this Jesus Christ, God-Man, to be the Saviour of sinners? For we cannot but love him with all our hearts and souls, who hath wrought out such great salvation for us, by such low abasement of himself. All who have been thoroughly sensible what *an evil thing, and bitter it is, to*
sin

*Psalm lxxxix.
19.

† Isai. ix. 6.

‡ 1 Joh. v. 20.

§§ Rom. ix. 5.

** Isai. xlii.
26.

sin against God, and have attained to deliverance from it by Jesus Christ, cannot but extol and exalt this Saviour to the throne of God, in their affection and esteem; which, if he were not the true God, is such vile idolatry, as would provoke him, who is the true God, to cast them down to Hell: For the true God is a jealous God, and will not allow to any other that supreme love, and fear, and honour, that are due only to him, who is the supreme Being. And therefore if Christ is not the true God, or we were not assured that he is, we must be condemned for that Faith, by which the Gospel tells us we are justified. How adorable then is the wisdom that chose a person in the Godhead to be the Saviour of Man! and how should we esteem and prize the Gospel that assures us,

* Tit. ii. 13. that it is *the great God* himself, that is *our Saviour* *! For had it been possible for any one less and lower than the most high God, to have been the Author of so great salvation, yet it would have been impossible for those who are saved by him, not to have made the most high God of him, by giving him, who is their supreme Benefactor, the honour and worship which is only due to the supreme Being. How very fit and proper is it then, with great solemnity and seriousness, to commit this glorious Gospel, as a most valuable and excellent thing, to the special care of faithful and able men?

[2.] *The difficulty of keeping and preserving this Gospel* in the world; that such persons,

sons, who are faithful and able to teach others, must be put in trust with it, and be separated from other employments, and set apart for this very business. We may indeed, with very good reason, suppose and expect that the Gospel being the good news of a Saviour, should be most readily received, and most carefully kept and preserved by all who stand in need of him, and cannot possibly escape everlasting misery without him : but we are so far lost and undone by sin, as to be deaf and averse to the proposals of salvation that are made in the Gospel. *Men will not come to Christ that they may have life* *.

* John v. 40.

They will not have this Man to reign over them. There are so many *hard sayings* in the Gospel, that *men cannot bear them* †. The Doctrines

† John vi. 60.

of the Gospel transcend the capacities of the natural Man, and are directly contrary to his high thoughts and *imaginations, that exalt themselves against the knowledge of God* ‖.

‖ 2 Cor. x. 5.

Every natural Man has pride enough to reject those mysterious incomprehensible truths that are revealed by the Gospel, and they refuse to believe what is too high and wonderful for them to attain a clear and distinct knowledge of. The way of salvation by Christ has been in every age opposed, wherever the Gospel has been preached. Many cunningly invented objections are very vehemently urged : and because the self-denial, and simplicity, the spirituality and purity of the

the Gospel are very displeasing to the natural Man; there is but too great a readiness to entertain all that is objected, and encourage all opposition that is made against it. There is a necessity, that the most faithful and most able, and such as are in every respect the best of men, should be set for the defence of the Gospel of Christ, and not only the upholding the credit thereof, but persuading men to give credit thereto. When this word of salvation is generally disliked and despised, many speaking evil of it, and many pouring contempt upon it, what a hard task have Ministers to beget in men an esteem of the Gospel, or to bring them to a belief of it? This cannot be effected but by *bringing every thought to the obedience of Christ.*

[3.] *The necessity of Ministers preaching the Gospel.* They are solemnly set apart for this very thing: the Gospel is what they are entrusted with. Every ordained Minister should often take the words of the Apostle *Paul* into his mouth, and say, * *necessity is laid upon me, yea, wo is unto me if I preach not the Gospel.* This is what every one comes under most sacred obligations to make the main business of his life, who is ordained a Minister in the Christian Church; and therefore this cannot be omitted or neglected, when they have opportunity and ability, without breaking their Ordination-Vow, which generally seems (and is commonly thought by others) to be made with the greatest

greatest seriousness and solemnity. It is necessary, that the only way of salvation, which is by Christ, should be made known to those sinful miserable creatures, who are lost and undone; and Preaching is the way appointed to spread the knowledge of the Gospel, and bring men savingly to believe it. Our blessed Lord, while here on earth, executing the office of a Prophet in his own person, speaks of himself as under a necessity to preach the Gospel*, *I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also, for therefore am I sent.* *Luke iv. 43. What a necessity then must lie upon all those who are put in trust with the Gospel, to publish these glad tidings of salvation, to as many as they can, of that vast number of men, who are in a perishing condition? And this cannot but be supposed to oblige those who are ordained, to do it in their own persons, and not by proxy. A wilful neglecting to preach, when persons have both strength and opportunity, is a very crying sin in those who are set apart for this sacred Ministry. If Christ must preach the Gospel, because he was sent, a like necessity must lie on those who are set apart, and sent on the same errand.

[4.] *It is the Gospel of Christ that is especially to be preached,* for it is the Gospel only that is committed to Ministers when they are solemnly ordained. The Gospel is the only thing they are most expressly entrusted with, and therefore their fixed design, and constant

endeavour must be to bring men to know, believe, and obey the Gospel. In this the Apostle *Paul* is unquestionably to be followed by Ministers, because in this he manifestly followed our Lord Jesus Christ, who being sent to preach the Gospel, Luke iv. 18. very diligently employed himself in this work, preaching and proving to the *Jews*, and also to the *Samaritans*, that *he is the Christ, the Saviour of the world*, John iv. 42. saying, *if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins*, John viii. 24. requiring his Disciples to *believe in him as they believed in God*, John xiv. 1.

The design of Christ, in preaching Sermons, and working Miracles, was the same with that of the Evangelist, in recording both the one and the other. Now this the Apostle *John* tells us, in the conclusion of his Gospel, is, that *we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing we might have life through his name*, John xx. 31. Christ was the Father's Apostle, sent to preach as well as purchase salvation; and the Disciples of Christ were his Apostles, sent to preach that Gospel whereby life and immortality are brought to light: Of this Gospel the Apostle *Paul* declares himself to be appointed a preacher and teacher, 2 Tim. i. 11. and with respect to this he saith, Galat. i. 8, 9. *Though we, or an Angel from Heaven, preach any other Gospel to you than that which we have preached, let him be accursed.*

The Gospel is called *Salvation*, Hebr. ii. 3. and *the Grace of God, that bringeth salvation*, Tit. ii. 11. and they who preach any other way of salvation, than that which the Apostle *Paul* had preached, and the Churches of *Galatia* had received, they must be accounted to preach another Gospel, as those certainly do, who speak of sinful man's obedience to the moral law, as that which will procure pardon of sin, peace with God, and a title to everlasting blessedness.

Indeed, as the Apostle tells us, Rom. iii. 20. *the knowledge of sin is by the Law*; and Galat. iii. 24. *The Law is our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ*; and therefore all explaining, and pressing obedience to the Law, is not preaching another Gospel; yea, so far is all opening and applying the moral Law from being contrary, or inconsistent with preaching the Gospel of the grace of God, that no Man does fully preach the Gospel of Christ, who does not instruct men in the true sense and meaning of the Law, and shew men the universal extent and eternal obligation thereof. By the Law men are brought to know what is sin, and what is the demerit thereof; and this is necessary to bring men to feel a need of Christ to save them from that everlasting misery that their sin deserves. By the Law men are brought to see the defects of their own obedience, and the perfection of Christ's righteousness. And it is by the Law that every Christian must regulate his

thoughts, words, and actions, yea, and his affections, inclinations, and aversions, if he will walk so as to please God, his heavenly Father, and have a conversation becoming the Gospel of Christ his Almighty Saviour.

But we must always remember that Jesus Christ is the person who *delivers us from the wrath to come*, 1 Thess. i. 10. and that it is *through Christ that we have peace with God*, Rom. v. 1. And the Apostle Peter, when he had declared to *Cornelius*, and those other Gentiles with him, *Acts* x. 35. that *God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him*; presently tells us, v. 36. that *the peace that is preached is by Jesus Christ*, and therefore it is to him that all our acceptance with God must be ascribed. Those who sinned in the *first Adam*, must perish everlastingly, unless saved by the *second. Christ is all, and that in all* who are saved, whatever difference there may be as to country, or nation, birth, or pedigree, or any thing else, whereon men are apt to value themselves. He was all to him who was *blameless as touching the righteousness which is in the Law*, Philip. iii. 6. as truly as to *the thief* on the Cross, who acknowledged the *justice* of his condemnation, *Luke* xxiii. 40, 41. Christ must therefore be preached to all, and all who are set apart to the Gospel, should always preach him.

I might add some other Inferences that may be very easily drawn from the portion of Scripture now before us; one of which should have been *the necessity of ministers being faithful in the executing of their office*, seeing they must be found to be faithful before they are put into it: they must shew all good fidelity in all the parts of their Ministry, and towards all persons, whether high or low, rich or poor, good or bad, weak or strong, instructing, exhorting, encouraging or reproving, reclaiming, censuring, according to the different cases, or different conduct of those they have to deal with. But how necessary and seasonable soever this may seem to be, I may not at this time insist upon it, nor enlarge on two other particulars, which I must mention before I conclude.

1. *All who believe the Gospel, must account every faithful Minister worthy of double honour*, according to the words of the Apostle, 1 Tim. v. 17. They who have the glorious Gospel of the blessed God committed to them, and are very diligent and laborious in spreading and promoting the *excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus* by preaching this Gospel, deserve to be loved and honoured on the account of their office and employment. Indeed, when revealed Religion is denied, the Revelation cannot escape being despised; and if the Gospel it self is run down, those

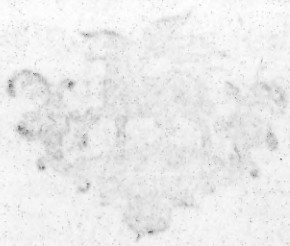
those to whom it is solemnly committed, and by whom it is faithfully preached, must expect to be lightly esteemed, and greatly reproached. How the custom of speaking contemptibly of Ministers does obtain in our day, and that even among those who sometimes attend on their preaching, I need not mention; but if any such account the Ministers of the Gospel *the filth of the world, and the off-scouring of all things*, (as the Apostle speaks, 1 Cor. iv. 13.) it can hardly be expected that these despisers will ever be cleansed from their filthiness, by such vilified preachers. Honour and esteem Ministers of the Gospel for your own sakes, as that which will contribute to your getting more good by them.

2. *It is very requisite and necessary to pray earnestly for Ministers*, who are entrusted with so great a treasure, and yet (as the Apostle expresses it, 2 Cor. iv. 7.) they are but *earthen vessels*. Is there not a cause then, for *Paul* in many of his Epistles to call upon and exhort Christians to pray for them, whose office and business it is to shew men the way of salvation? None is sufficient for, or successful in this great and difficult work, but such as receive proper supplies from the all-sufficient God. How much wisdom and prudence, resolution and courage, compassion and tenderness are necessary to enable men to fulfil the Ministry they have received? And whence can they receive it, but from the Fountain of Life, and Father of Lights, from whom every good and perfect gift

gift does descend? And how can they obtain it, but by prayer and supplication to the God of all grace, who gives liberally, without upbraiding? Every faithful Minister prays for his people, and all the faithful people should pray for their Ministers; and did they more abound in this duty, we might hope more success would attend the preaching of the Gospel, and then we might see decaying, dying Religion to revive and recover, and many of those who have been ignorant of God, and full of enmity against him, brought to *know* and acknowledge *the only true God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.*



(20)
the dearest of all. And how can they obtain
the prayers and supplications to the God
of all grace, who gives liberally, without ap-
pealing to the Father who answers prayer for his
people, and all the faithful people should pray
for their ministers; and that they receive abundant
grace, that we might hope more success
in the preaching of the Gospel,
and that we might see decaying souls
revive and recover, and many or
more who have been ignorant of God, and
without many other things, minister to them
and that we may see the work of God, and our
Saviour Christ, who gave himself for us,
to bring us to himself from all ungodliness
into himself, a peculiar people zealous
of good works.





Dr. *H A D F I E L D*'s
Confession of F A I T H,
 A N D H I S

Answers to the Questions then proposed to him by the Reverend Mr. *J O H N B E A U M O N T*.

Q U E S T. I.



T being necessary, before Persons are solemnly vested in the Office of the Ministry, that they believe all the Doctrines of God's Word, and be able and willing to give a reason of the Hope that is in them, with meekness and fear ; you are therefore now required to confess those Truths which you believe and desire to preach unto others.

Ans^w. As the Being and Existence of GOD is the Foundation of all Religion, I am abundantly persuaded, *That there is a God.* When I seriously consider the visible Constitution of Nature ; for Instance, the Number, Magnitude, Distances, Motion and Uses of the Heavenly Bodies : When I survey this Earth, and reflect upon its Figure, Gravity,
 G and

and marvellous Situation, with regard to the Fountain of Light and Heat; and the Properties of the Air, that Fuel of Life which encompasses it: When I behold the Furniture of the Earth in Plants of divers Kinds, all of them most admirable for their exquisite Structure and Beauty in Leaves, Flowers, Fruits and Seeds: When from these I descend to the Ocean, and consider its wonderful Aspect, its amazing Flux and Reflux, and the numberless astonishing Variety of Great and Small Beasts inhabiting this watery Region: Farther, when I contemplate the Fabrick of Animal Bodies, particularly the Body of Man, the exquisite Perfection, Beauty, Order and Aptness of its Parts to their proper and respective Ends; Contemplating these Things with the Subordination of one Creature to another, and the joint Concurrence of all to one common End, the Glory of God in serving his Vicegerent Man: Nay, and when to the foresaid Considerations, I yet add the common Consent and Tradition of all Ages, and the many indisputable Proofs we have from History, of Supernatural Events; weighing all these Articles in my Thoughts, I am hereupon fully convinced, that from all Eternity there must have existed a Being of absolute Perfection, whose Existence is necessary and uncaused, and which it must be a Contradiction to suppose not to exist. For if ever there was a Time when there was Nothing, there never could have been any Thing; unless

unless we can reconcile this Contradiction, that Nothing could of it self arise into Being; that is, that it might both be, and not be at the same Time. Nor is it less absurd to affirm, that there has been an infinite Series of changeable dependant Beings, produc'd one from another in an Eternal Progression, as natural Causes and Effects, without any One prime independant Cause of their Existence: For this Assertion supposes such Beings to exist without any Ground or Reason of their Existence. They are not supposed necessarily existent; and that they derived their Beings from the free Agency of One Necessary, Self-Existent Cause is denied, because no such Cause is supposed by the Patrons of this Scheme to exist. To be short, it is therefore so manifestly absurd to advance these, or indeed any other Arguments against the Existence of One Supreme, Independant First Cause of all Things, that even the most studied Atheism it self must be ashamed to insist upon them, and leave its Abettors secure in no other Refuge than an Obstinacy of Will to disown, rather than a Want of Understanding to conceive, or of superior Strength of Reason to refute what is urg'd upon them.

THIS Supreme Cause, of whose Necessary Eternal Existence there is such cogent and irrefragable Proof, I therefore believe must essentially and immutably be the infinite Power, Wisdom, Goodness, Truth, Righteousness, Excellence and Perfection; the prime

Author, continual Sustainer, and Ultimate End of Being, Life, and Blessedness to the universal Creation, according to the several Kinds, Natures and Capacities of his Creatures; A Truth, that is demonstrable not only from Effects and constant Experience, but from *prior* Evidence, such as arises from the Perfection of One absolutely Necessary and Self-Existent Being.

THE same Natural Light which thus evinces the Being and Perfections of One GOD, does I believe moreover and with equal Clearness evince, that universal Obedience and Conformity to his Holy Nature and Will is a Debt which the whole rational, intelligent Creation owe to this GOD, so long as their Existence and necessary Relation to Him is suppos'd; that is, so long as there are two such infinitely different Beings as GOD and our selves. For from the Nature of Man, a reasonable Creature, compar'd with GOD, the Infinite, Eternal, Unchangeable Rectitude, our Maker, Owner, Supreme Lord, and consummate All-comprehending Good, it necessarily follows, that Mankind stand oblig'd by Eternal immutable Laws to obey this GOD in all the notifications of his Will to them, as ever they will act up to the Dictates of their own impartial Reason, and obtain Everlasting Perfection and Blessedness to themselves in Him.

THE Knowledge of the Divine Will to Man being in many Things above the highest Improve-

provements of unassisted Reason to attain ;
 'tis evident, Mankind stands in need of a Su-
 pernatural Revelation : And whereas it im-
 plies no Contradiction to suppose GOD to
 make such a Discovery as this to his Moral
 Subjects, concerning what He would have us
 to understand, believe and do, in order to
 our real Perfection and Happiness, necessarily
 and invincibly desir'd by us ; But whereas, on
 the contrary, the Wisdom, Goodness, Mercy,
 nay, and even the Governing Justice of GOD,
 added to the Consideration of the Necessities
 of Men, do afford many very probable Ar-
 guments that this GOD would some time or
 other, for the mention'd Ends, make Him-
 self known to such Subjects of his Power and
 Providence: Consonant to this Scheme of Rea-
 soning, I do believe, that the Everblest GOD
 has evidently revealed Himself to us in all
 Things, necessary to our grand Spiritual and
 Everlasting Welfare, in those Writings known
 amongst us by the Names of the *Old* and *New*
Testament.

AND that these Writings, and the Re-
 ligion therein exhibited, are from GOD, I
 firmly believe ; When I consider their intrinsick
 Excellence, that they contain *Doctrines* great
 and glorious, many of which surpass the most
 elevated Heights of natural Reason to descry,
 but yet when revealed from a GOD of in-
 fallible Veracity, are very consistent with un-
 prejudic'd Reason, and contain in them no-
 thing of Contradiction thereunto ; And when

I consider moreover, that the *Practical Duties* enjoined us in these Writings of the Old and New Testament are all of them exactly agreeable to our natural Notions of GOD, and in every View most effectually conducive to the Moral Perfection and Happiness of Man; as they forbid all, even the least Sin, as they acquaint us with the best Method of Living, the Noblest Principles of Suffering, and the most comfortable Way of dying: Beyond this, finding that these said Duties are urg'd upon Men with such *powerful Motives*, and in such an awful Manner, as it becomes the supremely wise and righteous Governour of the World to make Use of, and as reasonable Creatures in their State of Trial might expect from Him: Connecting with these Considerations the Prophecies of Christ's Birth, Life, Sufferings, Death and Resurrection, foretold many Ages before they came to pass, not in a doubtful Phrase, as the *Heathen* Oracles spake, but expressly and with particular specifying Circumstances, all which afterward were punctually fulfilled; as were also those wonderful Events which were foretold would succeed to the Cutting off the *Messiah*, such, for instance, as the total and irreparable Destruction of *Jerusalem* and the *Jewish* State for rejecting the *Messiah*; the Bringing in of the *Gentiles* to the Knowledge and Worship of the true and only GOD, now reconciling all Nations of the World unto Him-

self

self thro' the Blood of His dear Son : Adding to these Evidences the Multitudes of uncontroll'd Miracles wrought by Jesus Christ and his Followers, the quick and extensive Propagation of the Gospel, its having in a few Years advanced to the Ends of the then known World, not with the Advantages which a rising Opinion, such as *Mahometanism* and *Popery*, ordinarily chuses to set up withal : That Christianity, void of these Advantages, did even by the most unlikely Instruments, and amidst all possible Hindrances to it from the Lusts and Violence of Men, make so vast a Progress in so short a Space of Time, is a Miracle equal to others wrought for its Confirmation : More than this, pondering the marvellous Preservation of the sacred Writings in the very worst of Times, and amidst the most inveterate Enemies to God and the Souls of Men : And once more, the very great Blessings accruing to those who conscientiously learn and practise what is therein notified and recommended : Going upon these Foundations, I am firmly persuaded that the Scriptures and the Religion taught in them are from God.

I BELIEVE then, according to the Account given of this Matter in the Scriptures of Truth, that *there are Three that bear Record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost ; and these Three, I believe, are One*, one God, as they bear the same Names, and have the same Divine Attributes and Operations

tions ascribed to them in Scripture. I believe that in the Godhead there are three Persons, and yet but one GOD, who is over All blessed for evermore.

I BELIEVE that all Events in Time and Eternity are perfectly known to GOD; and do issue according to his Eternal Preordination and Dispose; and this, without rendering the righteous Governour of the World the Author of any of his Creatures Actions, as sinfully modified.

I BELIEVE that God after he had made Man, Male and Female, in his own Image of Righteousness and true Holiness, enter'd into Covenant with them, obliging them, over and above the Performance of all Duties of Eternal Obligation, by a positive Precept to decline eating of *the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil*, promising them Life upon their perfect sinless Obedience, and threatening corporal and spiritual everlasting Death to them, in case of their Disobedience.

I BELIEVE this Covenant was made with our first Parents, not only for themselves, but for all their natural Offspring, then seminally existing in them; and who, when they commenc'd Subjects capable of moral Government, must of necessity be oblig'd, not only by the eternal immutable Law of Righteousness, resulting from their natural Relation to GOD, and from the necessary eternal Difference betwixt Good and Evil, but also, as Federates,
stand

stand engag'd, to conform themselves in all Things to the special Covenant of their G O D.

I BELIEVE that our first Parents being left to the Freedom of their own Will, did, thro' the Seduction of Satan, violate the natural Law of G O D and his superadded positive Inhibition in eating the forbidden Fruit; the Consequence of which Violation was the Loss of G O D's Spirit and Favour, the Pravity of their entire Nature, and the involving themselves and their Posterity in a Liableness to everlasting Condemnation. And tho' it would have been *a righteous Thing with G O D* for ever to have abandon'd the whole human Race to all the sad Consequences of *Adam's* first Transgression, 'εφ' ᾧ, *in whom all have sinn'd*; yet this infinite all-comprehending Wisdom, foreseeing the Apostacy of his rational, self-determining Creatures, was pleas'd to enter into a Compact with the Eternal Word, that Pardon and everlasting Salvation, (a more glorious Happiness than that from which they at first fell,) should be offer'd to lapsed Men, on Supposition the Son would condescend to be their incarnate Mediator, and in that Character repair the Honour of the Divine Government by fulfilling the Law of innocent Nature, *Moses's* Law, and together with both these, the Duty peculiar also to him as Mediator, authoriz'd and appointed of G O D to this Office. And as a Motive to this great and merciful Undertaking, I believe, it was stipulated of the Father, that He his only begotten Son, shou'd see of

the Travail of his Soul and be satisfy'd, and in the human Nature be super-exalted above all created Powers, Thrones and Dominions of Immortality and Bliss.

PURSUANT to this Proposal, I believe, That the Glorious and Eternal Son of GOD, the promis'd and expected *Messiah* did *in the Fulness of Time empty Himself*, and being conceiv'd by a Supernatural Power in the Womb of the Virgin *Mary* was born into this our World, *tabernacl'd* amongst us, and after a Life of laborious Diligence and immaculate exemplary Purity offer'd up Himself *thro' the Eternal Spirit* an expiatory Sacrifice on the Cross to GOD, *the Just One for us Unjust*. I believe, that as his dead Body was buried, so that his Soul departed into the unseen State, and that having vanquish'd Death and Him who had the Power of Death, he rose again from the Grave on the third Day; and that after forty Days visible Converse with a select Number on Earth, He ascended triumphant to the right Hand of the Majesty on high, where he now reigns GOD-MAN in everlasting Personal Union, exalted to be Head and Lord over all to his Church, having *all Power given to Him both in Heaven and in Earth*, whereby to accomplish the Ends of his undertaken Office.

I BELIEVE that this merciful Jesus having by his Life, Blood and Sufferings perfectly fulfill'd all Righteousness, merited at the Hands of GOD our Ransom from the Curse of the violated Law of innocent Nature, and
pur-

purchas'd for us a most gracious Covenant, every way suited to our fallen, impotent and miserable Estate.

ACCORDING to the declared Tenor of this Evangelical Covenant, I believe, that all who unfeignedly renounce their past Sins, and from a painful, sorrowful, and deeply humbling Sense of their own Condition, that they are Persons undone, altogether and for ever, without Christ and his Righteousness, without his justifying Grace, and sanctifying Spirit, for their Pardon and Acceptance with GOD, and for Healing and Reconciliation to Him;— That they, I say, who from this deep and inward Sense of their own Condition betake themselves to GOD, their Supreme felicitating End, by Means of a living Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the only appointed Way to this End, avowing Him for their compleat Saviour and heartily submitting to him in all his blessed Offices and Dominion over them, that He shall guide, sustain, comfort them, and *fulfil in them the whole good Pleasure of his Goodness*; I believe that such Persons as these, however vile and sinful in themselves, shall according to the Divine inviolable Promise be pardon'd and wash'd from the Pollution of their Sins in Christ's Blood; yea, that, as Himself has averr'd, they shall be justify'd, *i. e.* accepted and dealt with as righteous Persons in the Sight of GOD only for the Righteousness of Christ accounted to them upon their believing.

AND whereas none can come to Christ by a sincere Faith, but such as are given Him of GOD from all Eternity, nor even these except the Father by his own Spirit do first convince and draw them, I believe therefore that the Holy Spirit is conferr'd on the Chosen of GOD, effectually to overcome all their Resistances, and to give and maintain in them from Time to Time the Grace which shall infallibly end in everlasting Salvation and Blessedness to them. Nor is this atchiev'd by insuperable necessitating Impulse, as in Mechanic Cases, but in Ways consonant to the Nature of Moral Subjects: When Men are drawn to GOD, it is *with Cords of Love and the Bands of a Man*. And that any finally perish is not owing, I believe, to Want of Fulness in Christ's Ransom, or of the most sincere Desires on the part of GOD of their Salvation, but because such is the wilful Hardness and Impenitency of their Hearts, that they refuse to come to Christ for Pardon, Healing and Salvation.

I BELIEVE that Christ Jesus has a Society of Persons on Earth, which for the declar'd Consent and Union of its Members in the Essentials of Christianity, may be term'd the *Catholick Church*, notwithstanding a Difference of Sentiments with regard to external Discipline, Modes of Worship and secondary Articles: And that amongst these, all who are united to Christ by his Spirit, who partake of the same new Nature, walk by the same Rule, and are inspir'd with the same Hope of their
Calling,

Calling, have Communion, as with Christ their common Head in his Graces, Sufferings, Death, Resurrection and Glory, so in each other's Gifts and Graces, for their universal Help and Progress in the Divine Life. These are the *true invisible Church of God* and mystical Spouse of Christ.

FOR the gathering to Himself a Church of living Members, and for advancing their Edification in all the Graces and Comforts of the Holy Ghost, I believe that Jesus Christ has instituted certain external Ordinances to be celebrated in his Church till his final Coming; such as reading the Scriptures, Preaching, Prayer and singing of Psalms; the Success of which to the Souls of Men depends not on any inherent Virtue in these Institutions, or in him who does administer them, but wholly on the Blessing and Agency of the Spirit of GOD. *For neither is He that plants any thing, neither He that waters, but GOD that gives the Increase.*

I BELIEVE moreover, that this All-wise and gracious Legislator the Son of GOD has been pleas'd to ordain and annex to the Gospel Covenant two Seals or visible Signs of the Grace by them conveyed, and to be bestow'd on all qualified Receivers. By *Baptism*, the first of these, not only the Adult, professing Faith in Christ, and Obedience to his reveal'd Will, but also their Infant-Seed, are admitted Members of his visible Church; and if belonging to the Covenant are *wash'd from their*

their Sins in his Blood who lov'd us, and gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar People, zealous of good Works. By the Sacrament of the *Lord's Supper*, in which are represented to us the Death and Sufferings of Christ, the Malignity and Danger of Sin, the inflexible Justice of G O D, as also his most amazing boundless Compassion to the Souls of lapsed Men ; By this Sacrament, I say, all worthy Receivers do share in the Blessings of the Mediator's Blood, are engag'd to a lively thankful Remembrance of this Eternal Benefactor, and do vow in his Name to express it more and more every Day by promoting his Kingdom and walking in all regards as becomes *the high and honourable Vocation wherewith they are call'd.*

FOR diffusing the same divine Life, Light and Love amongst all Nations, in Opposition to the vile Designs and Confederacy of Satan, as likewise for the more orderly Administration of Church-Affairs, I believe that our Lord Jesus Christ when *He ascended up on high gave Gifts unto Men*, some extraordinary and temporary, as *Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists* ; and others ordinary, as *Pastors and Teachers*, to succeed each other in feeding and ruling *in the Lord a willing People*, made such *in the Day of his Power*. And that as Christ qualifies Men by Gifts and gracious Dispositions for this eminent Service of the Ministry, so when set apart to it by *Fasting,*

Fasting, Prayer, and, when it can be had, by *the laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery*, his Presence is insured to them even in all their Labours and Sufferings for his Name's sake, and that to the End of the World.

I BELIEVE that as it is irrevocably appointed of GOD to all Men once to die, or to sustain a Change equivalent to Death, so that in the End of Time there shall be a Resurrection both of the Just and Unjust effected by the Power of that God who can accomplish every Thing which infers no Contradiction to his essential Attributes and Perfections.

I BELIEVE also that hereupon the fallen Angels now reserved in everlasting Chains under Darknes, and with them the whole human Race shall be conven'd before Christ's awful Tribunal, and that after Men have given an Account of themselves, according to that Edition of GOD's gracious Covenant under which they liv'd, they shall in their intire nature receive a final, irreversible Sentence from the Mouth of their Righteous Judge. *To them who by patient Continuance in well-doing have sought for future Glory, and Honour and Immortality*, He will assign *Eternal Life*: But to them who have been contentious and would not obey the Truth, but have obey'd *Unrighteousness*, will He recompence *Indignation and Wrath, Tribulation and Anguish* to endure for ever. That there shall be such a Retribution another Day, I stedfastly believe,

believe, when I consider the eternal immutable Difference there is between Good and Evil, the Natural Capacity of our Souls to sustain such a Doom, the Natural universal Expectation and Dread there is in Men of a future Retribution: Nay, and when to these I add the manifest Necessity of it to restrain Men from all Kinds of Wickedness and Degeneracy, and moreover that it is necessary to quicken and support good Men in the steady Practice of real Religion, to assert the Honour of GOD and to vindicate the Justice of the present Administrations of his Providence: All these Considerations connected with the manifold express Testimony given to this Doctrine in the *Gospel of GOD*, are with me so many cogent and irrefutable Proofs of this future most righteous Retribution, that I both believe it, and desire nothing so much as to approve my self faithful to GOD in this State of Trial, that *I may be found of Christ in Peace without Spot and blameless in that important Day.*

QUEST. II.

Whereas the Church has been corrupted by Popish Errors, Superstition and Idolatry; and it has pleas'd God by worthy Instruments, to effect and support a Reformation, it is now demanded, whether you cordially approve the Protestant Reform'd Religion in Opposition to Popery?

Answer.

Answ. Relying on the Holy Scriptures as the infallible Test of all Religion, and comparing the *Papal* Church with what is contain'd in these Writings, I learn that that Church has audaciously corrupted the Christian Doctrine, Worship and Discipline ; and I see farther from numberless uncontested Facts, that she supports her Kingdom, (evidently of *this World*;) by Methods consonant to her Vices as *Papal*, but directly contrary to, and utterly subversive of the Spirit, Laws, and Interest of Christ, the Supreme invisible Head of his Church, and indeed of all that is desirable both in Civil and Religious Life. Reflecting upon this, I cannot but rejoice in the wonderful Mercy of GOD, in delivering these Nations from such *Antichristian* Dominion, and in restoring to us the uncorrupted Word of GOD, and that necessary Foundation of all Religion, a Liberty sincerely and impartially to examine the Grounds of every Thing which bears the Name of Truth, and conformably to its Evidence to our Understanding, to determine our Conduct in regard to GOD and Men, without being over-aw'd into one particular Scheme by the Terrors of this World, and the denounc'd *Anathemas* of that to come,

QUEST. III.

Forasmuch as Sincerity of Heart and Designs is necessary in a Gospel-Minister to attain the great Ends of his Office ; You are de-

I

sir'd,

sir'd, as under the Eye of GOD, to declare the Reasons which chiefly induce you to chuse this sacred Employment?

Ans. So far as I can apprehend of myself after the strictest Researches made into my own Heart, I trust I am, in some Measure, truly sensible of the high Honour and vast Importance of the Ministerial Office, and do undertake it from a hearty Desire to advance the Honour of GOD, and the grand Spiritual Everlasting Welfare of the Souls of Men; and from no such base Motives as the Esteem and Applause of my Fellow-Men, and much less from any Hopes of exalting my Secular Interests by it.

QUEST. IV.

Whereas Knowledge is incompleat, and Grace imperfect in the best, and hereupon a Progress in both is on many Accounts necessary; Will You for this Purpose be diligent in Prayer, Reading and Meditation?

Ans. From a deep Conviction of my own manifold Insufficiency for the Ministerial Work, I do purpose and resolve in the Name of the Lord Jesus, that I will seriously, diligently and constantly devote myself to Reading, Meditation and Prayer, as Means proper to compass a more enlarg'd Acquaintance with the Blessed GOD, and greater Qualifications for the Service of his Church.

QUEST.

QUEST. V.

Seeing that you will by Office be oblig'd to preach the Word of GOD, to administer the Sacraments, and to exercise Pastoral Discipline; Do you promise the utmost Faithfulness and Impartiality in these and all other Works relating to your Charge?

Ans. Regarding the Obligations this Day set before me, and to be charg'd home upon me from the Eternal GOD, I promise to be instant in Season, and out of Season, to take heed to ALL the Flock over which the Holy Ghost shall constitute me Overseer, and to strive to make full Proof of my Ministry in the conscionable Exercise of its several Parts, being strengthen'd unto all this by the Power and Goodness of GOD.

QUEST. VI.

Ministers being appointed not only to preach, but to defend Gospel Truths, by opposing the Adversaries thereto of all sorts; Will you be zealous and faithful herein, as becomes the Importance of your Character, and the Trust committed to You.

Ans. As I believe that Ministers are set for the Defence of the Gospel against Gainfayers, and are requir'd by Heaven's Authority earnestly to contend for the Faith, which was once deliver'd unto the Saints, 'tis my firm Purpose, assum'd in the Name of Christ, as on the one hand to avoid unprofitable Disputations, so on

the other, to my utmost, to assert and defend *necessary Gospel-Truth*, against all such as deny, pervert, or corrupt it: and this Part of my Office I hope to perform by proposing the Evidence of Truth to Mens Understandings in the strongest Light I am able, and by urging it upon their Consciences with that Spirit of Meekness and Affection which is recommended by Christ, and which an honest Desire to benefit the Souls of Men will naturally inspire on such an Occasion.

QUEST. VII.

Whereas uncharitable Animosities and Schisms are of dangerous Consequence to the true Interest of the Church; Will you, as far as is consistent with Truth, endeavour to preserve Unity and Peace in the Church, in Opposition to Schism and Contention?

Ans. Being appriz'd that the Church Unity instituted and approv'd of Christ consists in *One Body, and One Spirit, even as we are call'd in One Hope of our Calling; One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism, One GOD and Father of All*, I hope inviolably to maintain this Unity. And in Things of *doubtful Disputation*, wherein Uniformity is neither feasible nor necessary, I hope to act with that Condescension and Love which will best secure Peace and Concord among Christians, in Opposition to a tenacious Stiffness, Pride, and Uncharitableness, the known Ensigns of

of Schism, Church-Tyranny, and Persecution.

QUEST. VIII.

Whereas Exemplary Holiness is necessary in a Gospel-Minister as well as Purity of Doctrine, and whereas every such Minister is one who rules his own House well; Will you take Care in the Strength of Grace, that you and your Family, whenever you shall have one, shall walk with God suitably to the just Expectations of God and Men from you in this Capacity?

Ans^w. Shou'd Divine Providence ever place me in that Relation, I hope therein to behave my self wisely, walking in my House with a perfect Heart, and taking Care, so far as my Foresight, Example, Authority and Influence can extend, that I and my House shall serve the Lord.

QUEST. IX.

As well Ministers as others being liable to great Temptations and Corruptions, the Evil of which is considerably prevented by godly Admonition and Discipline rightly apply'd and receiv'd; Will you with all Humility of Mind submit to the Admonitions of your Brethren in the Ministry, and to the Discipline of the Church?

Ans^w. Whenever thro' Weakness of Understanding, or the Power of any Temptation I recede from the Obligations of my
Cha-

Character, as a Christian Minister; I hope I shall willingly, humbly and thankfully submit to the Admonition of my Brethren and Friends, and also to the Discipline of the Christian Church.

QUEST. X.

FORasmuch as the Gospel-Ministry is no Service to be deserted, but must be persisted in, even amidst those great and manifold Temptations, Troubles and Persecutions which the Exercise of our Office in this ungodly World exposes us to; Will you, notwithstanding all this, promise to continue in the Work of your Office so long as you shall be found capable thereof.

Ans^w. I enter upon my Master's Work with Expectation that Satan and his Confederates will to their utmost oppose me in, and deter me from it: But whatever of this Kind may befall me, I hope in GOD I shall never neglect, much less abandon my Ministry. Nay, and tho' I should be call'd even to the *fiery Trial*, to seal with my Blood the glorious Gospel of the Blessed GOD committed in Trust unto me, I hope that as my Day is, so my Strength shall be, inasmuch as I am daily pleading this Promise at the Throne of Grace, humbly and earnestly imploring, that the faithful GOD for Christ's sake would perform it in me, *that I may finish my Course with Joy.*



A
C H A R G E
G I V E N T O
Dr. H A D F I E L D,
B Y T H E
Reverend Mr. REYNOLDS.

DEAR BROTHER,



YOU have been solemnly set apart by
Prayer and Imposition of Hands
to the Office of the Gospel-Mi-
nisty.

I rejoice and bless God who hath
qualified you, and inclined your Heart freely
to engage in this difficult but honourable Un-
dertaking. Many Things have been deliver'd
in the *Sermon* you have heard, that I hope have
been attended to, and will be duly remembered
by *you* and the *People*.

But yet in order to carry on the further
Solemnity of this Day, and to leave you un-
der the deepest Impression possible, it lies up-
on

on me to finish what does more especially concern you, with a close Exhortation or more serious Charge. I pray God, I may perform my Duty in such manner as to attain its End.

I will be faithful to you, and therefore beg you will give heed to what I shall say, it being of the greatest Importance to the Success of your Ministry, and to your own Comfort and Joy, when you shall be call'd to give an Account of your Stewardship.

I shall ground my Exhortation on those Words, which you have in the

2 Epist. *Tim.* iv. 5. *But watch thou in all Things.*

IN this and the foregoing Epistle St. *Paul* gives us a particular Account of the Duties belonging to the Ministerial Office, and recommends them to his beloved *Timothy* with great weight of Argument and Earnestness of Spirit. Here he is doing the same Thing. 'Tis as if he had said ' My Son *Timothy*, whom I love in the Bowels of Christ, ' and whose Prosperity and Success in the Ministry I have greatly at Heart, as in other ' Things so in these that belong to thy Office ' as a Minister, or Bishop of Souls, thou hast ' been faithfully instructed by me. And now ' that which I give in Charge is this; That thou ' be watchful in all Things.

These

These Words, *my Brother*, I must apply to you.

You see here a special Duty. It is to *watch*, and this not only others, but your self too. Indeed because you are to watch over others, you have Reason to have the greater Heed to yourself.

You see the Extent of this Duty. It takes a large Compass, reaching to *every Thing*, which in any Respect does concern, or may have an Influence into your Office.

As to the Nature of the Duty, *Watching*, I need not say much to you concerning it. You know there is a natural and a spiritual Watching. The *Natural* being oppos'd not only to bodily Sleep and Drowsiness, but to idle Sloth and Negligence, implies not only a wakeful Disposition of Body (for a Man may be awake, and yet not said to watch) but such an Employment and Exercise as is taken up in espying and narrowly looking out in order to discover any approaching Inconvenience or Danger, and in taking proper measures for the avoiding of *that*, as well as doing every thing else belonging to the part of a *Watch-Man*. In Allusion hereto, the Duty of *spiritual Watchfulness* must consist in a wakeful lively Temper of Mind, in a diligent Exercise of Thought and Study to avoid every thing that may injure your Ministry, and to do every thing that may preserve and promote its Usefulness.

It is this *spiritual Watchfulness*, that I must principally charge upon you; not that I need

wholly to exclude the *Other*. For no doubt you are persuaded with me, that an Excess of bodily Sloth, and all those Things which feed it, are a great Hindrance to those lively Exercises of the Mind, which Ministers ought to be constantly engaged in. Intemperance and indulged Sloth are dishonourable to any Man, and most unworthy of a Minister. Oh how much Mischief does the Devil do, when he hath turn'd a Minister into a Sot ! There is little Success to be expected from his Ministry, when he shall visibly indulge himself in any fleshly Sin. I believe there is no need of warning you in this particular, tho' I can't forbear mentioning it, because of the unspeakable Mischief I have known done by it.

But it is *watching in a spiritual Sense* that I shall here recommend, and must in the Name of our great Lord enjoin you. This is what must run thorough the whole of your Office, through all the Parts and Exercises of it, as having a Concern in every Thing that relates thereto. For this Reason, I apprehend, that in the Description of the Church *Rev. iv. 6.* the *four Beasts* (thought to be the Emblem of Gospel-Ministers) are represented *full of Eyes both behind and before*, thereby denoting their great Circumspection and Watchfulness. Full of Eyes before, to discern their Way, to understand their Duty and the Manner of performing it : And full of Eyes behind, to observe their Enemies, who by all manner of secret Arts and Methods may design their Hurt.

Hurt, as those that come softly and secretly behind a Man to do him a Mischief.

I therefore repeat my Exhortation, and seeing you have taken upon you the most important Office in the World. I pray and beseech you, nay, I charge you before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, *That you be watchful in all Things.*

To mention every Thing comprehended under this General, is more than the Time allotted me will suffice for. But among many Things I shall mention several, which I think of Consequence, and which it concerns every Minister to be very careful about. After which, I shall suggest a few Motives proper to enforce my Exhortation, and then conclude with an Observation or two, not improper for you, *my Brethren*, who have accepted this worthy Person for your Minister.

1st, Let me press the *Duty of Watchfulness* upon you, *my Brother*, in the following particulars. As,

[1.] See that you *watch in all Things* relating to you *in a private Capacity*. And herein endeavour to have and keep matters upon a right Foot between God and your own Soul. I deny not, that a Man may be used in the Ministry as an Instrument of Good to others, who yet may not be very good himself; but then I must affirm, that he will not be in a Condition likely to promote Goodness in others with that Success as otherwise, and besides He must be at the same Time a most

miserable Man himself. Oh how sad to be Instruments of showing others the Way to Heaven, but go down to Hell ourselves! The Apostle *Paul* you know was deeply concern'd, lest by any means, when He had preach'd the Gospel to others, *He himself should be a Cast-away*, 1 Cor. ix. 27. See then to the saving your own Soul, as well as the Souls of them that hear you. *Take Heed to yourselves*, and then *to the Flock*, &c. Acts xx. 28. Under this Head I would offer a few Things to you.

1. Be sure you *have your Conscience bearing you Witness that you have most sincerely and unreservedly devoted yourself to God*; that you have subscrib'd to the Gospel Covenant, and have given up your Heart as well as Name to the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is of great Consequence to your personal Comfort and Peace, as well as it will have a great Influence into your Faithfulness in the Ministry. *With what Heart can that Man preach the Doctrine of Repentance to others* (says a great Divine) *that never truly repented himself? or preach Faith and Holiness to others, who is himself an Unbeliever and unholy?* Whatever he does of this nature, it is (I may say) with a feign'd Air, and not in Truth and Sincerity.

2. Upon finding the Root of the Matter in yourself, *be careful in improving upon it*, by maintaining a close and constant Communion with the blessed God. Pray, and read, and meditate

meditate and study for your self as well as others. Let there be due and stated Seasons for Retirement and secret Converse with God, and understand well the State and Frame of your own Soul, as well as of theirs, whom God hath committed to your Care. Take heed you be not more intent in acquiring a Stock of Knowledge than of Grace. It is to be confess'd that Knowledge is a pleasant and desirable thing, consider'd speculatively, and in it self only; but have a Care lest an over-eager Thirst after this, jostle out those Duties and Exercises of Piety towards God, which are necessary to the maintaining and improving that Life of Faith and Holiness, for which you should be conspicuous and eminent. Therefore in the

3^d Place, see that you *experience in your own Heart what you preach* and recommend to others. Let others observe the Impression it has upon yourself. Watch that in all things you approve your self a pattern of the things you deliver. *Be an Example*, as the Apostle writes to *Timothy*, *in Word, in Conversation, in Charity, in Spirit, in Faith, in Purity*; 1 Tim. iv. 12. And again Chap. vi. v. 11. *Follow after Righteousness, Godliness, Faith, Love, Patience, Meekness*. An habitual heavenly Temper of Mind will not only be a great Help to you in your Preparations, but add great Weight and Force to your Ministry. For what Objection or Excuse shall People make, when they see the Feasibleness of

of what you preach, in the Example you set them, by your own Life and Conversation. When you do not only preach Salvation, but shew them the Way to it by your own Practice and Demeanour? But,

[2.] A second general I have to charge upon you, That if it shall please God to make you the *Head of a Family*, you be *watchful of all Things relating to the Government of it*. It is mentioned as one Ingredient (and a very important one it is) in the Character of a Gospel-Minister, that *He be one that ruleth well his own House: For if a Man know not how to rule his own House, how shall he take Care of the Church of God?* 1 Tim. iii. 4, 5. If He do not acquit himself in the lesser, how will he do it in the greater? I need not tell you how the good or bad ordering of a Family will have an Influence into your Reputation and Ministry. Herein then be also watchful in all Things. Let it be as little as may be in the power of false and faithless Servants to asperse, or injure you, either whilst they live with you, or when they go from under your Roof. See that *you and your House do serve the Lord*. For a Man to appear as an Angel in the Pulpit, but to practise gross Wickednesses in his Family, what a Reproach will it bring, and what an Injury will it prove to his Ministrations? Be careful then to walk with God in your own House *in a perfect Way and with a perfect Heart*. Among many things that might here be

suggested, I shall mention but two or three.

1. *Be a Pattern of Meekness and Love*, which will be a great means of keeping Peace in your House. When we so wisely behave, as to have the love of the Family, they in return will be afraid of doing any thing to offend and grieve us. Gain every one's Reverence more from Love and that Meekness of Wisdom they discern in you, than from a magisterial Air and Authority.

2. *Set a Pattern of Serious Godliness in your House*. How can we be in earnest in promoting the spiritual Welfare of others, if we have no Concern for the Salvation of those that Nature has plac'd nearest to us? In a word,

3. *Endeavour so to dispose matters in your Family, as that good Order and Method be observ'd in your Managements*. When every one shall know their Work, their Place and their Times, it will mightily tend to keep all Things smooth and easy. And what a Beauty this will put upon a Family, every one must be sensible. But I cannot (as there is at present no need I should) enlarge upon these Things. I come therefore,

[3.] To what does more immediately respect your *publick Ministry*. And here I must again repeat the Words of the Apostle, *Watch thou in all Things*, and as He says in the same Place, *Make full proof of thy Ministry*. Under

der this Head I shall hint a few Things, the doing of which will be enough to one who is so capable, and I trust inclin'd to make a proper Application of them.

1. *Improve all the Means and Opportunities of Study* that are consistent with your Health and other parts of your Work. Whilst you have Time and Strength, be adding still to that good stock of Knowledge you have already attain'd. Do not think it enough to be able to teach your People Religion, but that you also be capable and ready to defend it. We must not only feed Christ's Sheep, but preserve them from those Beasts of Prey that would devour them. *Give* therefore *Attendance to Reading*, as the Apostle speaks. He that would approve himself a Workman, that need not be ashamed, must read, and study, and pray, that He may be able to acquit himself rightly in all Things. Not that you are to confine your self wholly to your Study, but must remember that now you will have much Work to do besides.

2. *Endeavour to lay up a good Stock of spiritual Experience* as well as Knowledge. Head Knowledge is necessary, and when accompanied with that of the Heart, it makes a Man doubly useful. Experience of the Ways of God's dealing with Souls, will beget in you a sympathizing Tenderness, that will both ingratiate you with those who shall crave your Help, and also direct you in a proper Conduct towards them. He that hath been under

der spiritual Exercises himself, is like a skilful Surgeon, who having had his own Limb broken, knows how to pity, as well as to cure those in the like Circumstance: such a one may well be suppos'd to carry it with more Compassion and Patience, than he that is wholly a Stranger to such Exercises, altho' in point of speculative Knowledge he be like *Nicodemus a Master in Israel*, John iii. 10.

3. *Labour to recommend your self* to your People in that Qualification of a Minister, which is intended by the Apostle's Expression to *Timothy* of an *aptness to teach*, 1 Tim. iii.

2. This is another Ingredient that ought to go into the Character of a Minister. Our Saviour intimates the same, when he tells us, That *a Scribe instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven, is like a Man that is an Householder, which bringeth out of his Treasure things new and old*, Matth. xiii. 52. As he hath a Treasure of sound Knowledge within him, so he should know how to produce or bring it out, as Occasion shall require. This Aptitude to teach is an excellent Gift of God to be thankfully acknowledg'd and improv'd where it is granted. It lies in a Readiness and Facility of explaining Things to People's Capacities, of setting them in a clear Light, and recommending them according to their Nature and Imporrance. This will make you exceeding helpful to others, and therefore the more you have of it, the more capable will you be to answer the Designs of your Office.

4. When you preach the Word *don't spend your Time in entertaining People with Notions*

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too high for them, and which have no Connection with their Salvation. Do not feed them with needles or unprofitable Matters, but endeavour to enrich their Minds with sound and saving Doctrines, with such Truths as if believed and practis'd will make them wise to Salvation. Do not perplex their Heads with Controversies they never heard of. Indeed when any receiv'd and necessary Truths shall come to be invaded by crafty and potent Enemies, we ought to regard ourselves as set by our Office in defence of the Gospel. Such invaded Truths become then the Controversy of the Day, and by how much they are impugn'd and run down, by so much the more at proper Seasons and in a proper Manner should we preach them up, maintain and defend them, warning our People of, and guarding them against the danger of the contrary Errors, and *contending earnestly for the Faith once deliver'd to the Saints*. But when the Case is otherwise, 'tis needless and unprofitable to puzzle People's Heads about erroneous Notions, that have been long since confuted and exploded.

5. Endeavour to *make Jesus Christ the governing Subject of all your Discourses*. Herein follow the Example of the Apostle St. Paul, who in a comparative Sense *determin'd to know nothing save Jesus Christ and him crucified*. All our Discourses should be built upon him as the Foundation, and resolved into him as their proper Center. Preach him as the only purchaser

chafer of our Redemption, and as that glorious
 vital Head that communicates Life to all his
 real Members ; who, as by his Obedience and
 Sufferings He hath merited eternal Redemp-
 tion for us ; so by the Operations of his blef-
 sed Spirit doth effectually apply the Benefit
 of them to us. The Doctrine of the free Grace
 of God in Jesus Christ, the Covenant of Re-
 demption between the Father and Son con-
 cerning the Elect ; the Mediation of Christ as
 executed in his threefold Office of a Prophet,
 Priest, and King, and the glorious Perfections
 of his Person as God and Man to accomplish
 what he undertook ; the Righteousness of
 Christ accounted or imputed to us, and re-
 ceived by Faith alone, as that by which we
 obtain Peace with God, and are entitled to
 eternal Life and Happiness ; the Honour, Of-
 fices and Operations of the Person of the
 Holy Ghost ; His Mission into the Hearts of
 God's People as the Purchase of Christ, the
 necessity of his Operations in the Work of
 Regeneration and Sanctification, and our con-
 stant dependance upon Christ as the Lord our
 Strength as well as Righteousness to begin,
 carry on, and perfect in us all the Concerns
 of the Christian Life in a way of Faith and
 Holy Obedience, till we be made made meet
 for the heavenly Happiness ; and the Displays
 of that Happiness, in all its Antecedents and
 Concomitants, according to the Accounts we
 have of it in the Scriptures, are, I humbly
 conceive, the proper Subjects of the Gospel Mi-
 nistry,

nistry, and should be mainly and chiefly insisted upon by us in our Discourses; and especially in these Times, when so many are setting up for meer natural Religion, and would, if it were possible, banish all reveal'd Religion, (which contains in it the only way of Salvation) out of the World. But to go on.

6. *Shew your self a Person whom God hath endow'd with a good stock of spiritual Prudence.* Wisdom is requir'd in Ministers as much as in any others whatsoever. *He that winneth Souls is wise*, Prov. xi. 13. He is represented to be a *wise* as well as faithful *Steward*, that knows how to give to every one their Portion in due Season, *Luke* xii. 42. It requires Prudence to act suitably to every Case; to know what, and when, and in what methods to apply to the nice and ticklish Tempers of Men, and to conduct all Things in such manner as shall tend to their Spiritual Comfort and Happiness. Experience and Scripture-Example may convince us of this. I have often thought by what an admirable Turn of Wisdom our Saviour gain'd Entrance into the Heart of the *Samaritan* Woman, a grievous Sinner, how He insinuated and wound himself into her Affections, convincing her of her Sin, and winning her Heart at the same time. The History is worthy our reading and considering: You have it in *John* iv. almost throughout the whole Chapter. Herein no doubt he hath set us an Example. I might mention to this purpose

purpose the holy Skill, and dextrous Contrivance of *Nathan* the Prophet in dealing with *David* the King by uttering a Parable concerning the Ewe-Lamb, whereby he was led unawares into a just Condemnation of himself, and made the Instrument of his own Conviction; see 2 *Sam.* xii. at the Beginning. But next to Jesus Christ himself, we have not a more illustrious Instance of this spiritual Wisdom than in the Person of the Apostle *Paul*, who gives us this Account of his Conduct and Management: That he was *made all Things to all Men*, (that is, in things indifferent, not sinful, He accommodated Himself to all Persons) *that He might win some*, 1 *Cor.* ix. 22. Several He *caught with Guile*, 2 *Cor.* xii. 16. Now let us imitate as much as may be this holy Wisdom and Prudence, considering in some their natural Temper, in others the State of their Condition in the World, in all the Nature of their Temptations, and in our Behaviour towards them, carrying it with all those pure and innocent Methods of Address, that are proper to insinuate into their Affections, to gain their Hearts, and render our Endeavours for the saving of their Souls effectual. But,

7. *Exercise an indefatigable Diligence in the discharge of your Function.* Indeed the saving of immortal Souls is a matter of such importance and so desirable, that in labouring for it we should grudge no Pains, and let slip no Opportunity, whereby we might attain

our End. *Herein you should gladly spend and be spent*, 2 Cor. xii. 15. When the Apostle is pressing diligence upon his Son *Timothy*, observe with what Authority he speaks, and the weight there is in every Word: *I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his Kingdom, preach the Word, be instant in Season, out of Season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all Long-Suffering and Doctrine*, 2 Tim. iv. 1, 2. This I take to be meant by what the Apostle subjoins in the Text, of doing the Work of an Evangelist. But I must hasten:

8. *Shew your self a Pattern of Self-denial.* There is nothing in this respect but you should inure yourself to the Practice of. This is the first Lesson that even every private Beginner, every Babe in Christ is directed to learn. If without this we can't be admitted as Christ's Disciples, much less are we worthy to be admitted as his Ministers. We must be ready to deny ourselves in all our Worldly Interests, in our Enjoyments, in our Reputation, in our Ease, to endure Afflictions, as it follows in the Text, and be content to suffer the loss of all things rather than prove unfaithful to our great Lord and Master. But as in all Instances, so there are three more especially, wherein I would exhort you to be conspicuous; namely, that you would deny yourself in the love of *filthy Lucre*, the love of *vain Glory*, and in giving way to *personal*
Resent-

Resentment. Because, if these shall be found to govern you, I need not tell you how detrimental they will be to the Success of your Ministry. But blessed be God, you are a Pattern and Instance of the first of these (I hope you will be of the rest) seeing that tho' by your Learning and Diligence you have attain'd to a Capacity of pursuing greater Advantages another way, and by which several of our own knowledge (once design'd for the Ministry) have very much advanc'd themselves; yet notwithstanding this, and in such a day as this, when the Ministry is render'd and become contemptible in the Eyes of almost all sorts of People, you have offer'd your self to the Service of God's House; and that too in a way different from the legal Establishment, being induc'd not by Pique and Humour, but conviction of Judgment and the constraints of Conscience. All this, I hope, is from those Engagements of Love you find in yourself to your Lord and Master Jesus Christ, and the precious Souls of Men. This gives me ground to believe, that what I have to add in the next place will be regarded by you. And this is,

9. That you *render your self conspicuous for your impartial Faithfulness* in the discharge of your Duty. Watch that you may be faithful in all things. Deceive no Man, flatter no Man, but be true to their greatest and best Interests, as one that must render an Account. Ever bearing in Remembrance those awful Words spoken by the Lord to
 would the

the Prophet *Ezekiel* ii. 17. and 'onwards, *Son of Man, I have made thee a Watchman unto the House of Israel: Therefore hear the Word at my Mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the Wicked, thou shalt surely die, and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the Wicked from his wicked way, to save his Life, the same wicked Man shall die in his Iniquity, but his Blood will I require at thine Hand, &c.*

These, my Brother, are some of those things I have had in my Thoughts to recommend to your Study and Care, consider'd in your private personal Capacity, or in relation to a Family, or in relation to that Christian Society, over which God hath this Day made you the Guide and Pastor.

After all this, I must still crave yours and the Auditory's Patience, whilst I add a Word or two of Advice in relation to your Conduct, not only to your People, but all others whatsoever that you may converse or be concern'd with. And the

1st, Is this, *Watch against the Sourness of Melancholy.* A Minister should guard against this, as well as the other Extreme of frothy Mirth and foolish Levity. I confess, it is hard to observe the due Medium, and therefore the greater need of Watchfulness. It may be more difficult to some than others, according as by natural Constitution and Temper they may be bent and inclined. But we must know

know ourselves, and make it our Care to guard against that Extreme to which we are most liable. A chearful Spirit hath great Advantage on the one hand, in more Respects than the Time allows me to mention, and a desponding Melancholy hath as great Inconveniency, if not more, on the other; and therefore to be heedfully resisted and watch'd against. But tho' I caution you against this, it is by no means to encourage you in any thing that is foppish or vain. We are the Salt of the Earth, Christ expects that the World be seasoned with our Conversation, not corrupted by any thing they see or hear from us.

2dly, Another piece of Advice is, That you *exercise a true Christian Charity*, 1. *To all Mankind*, so as to do all the Good you can to those within your reach, and as you have an Opportunity. 2. *To all your Fellow-Christians*, that is, to all that hold the Head, agreeing with you in the great Fundamentals of Religion, tho' in lesser Matters they may differ from you. A real Affection may and ought to be maintained towards all, that bear the Image of Christ, tho' in some things of less moment we should not be of the same Sentiments; otherwise I know not what Ground there is for those Exhortations to mutual Forbearance and Love which we frequently meet with in the Gospel. Yea, I must go further, and say, there is a Charity to be extended to those that deny the Faith; to the

Enemies of the Cross of Christ, as well as to those that are Enemies to our Persons. Not such a Charity as shall sooth and lull Men asleep in the greatest Errors, a Charity allowing no Danger to Men's Opinions, upon a supposition as uncertain as the Hearts of Men are deceitful, which is, that they be honest in their Inquiries; of which sort of Charity I must frankly own I have no Notion, unless it be that of Hatred to the Souls of Men. But such a Charity as consists in pitying them, praying for them, remonstrating against their Errors, using Endeavours to convince them, and by Argument attended with a Spirit of Meekness, to recover them to Repentance and an Acknowledgment of the Truth. But by no Methods of Violence, which have made a world of Hypocrites, but not one real Profelyte, there being in their Nature nothing that tends to work a Conviction, but quite the reverse.

I am drawing to a Close, and therefore add,

3dly, *Endeavour by a becoming Freedom, Courteousness and Affability, to recommend yourself to the Esteem and Good Opinion of all Men.* But then take heed not to flatter any Man through Complaisance. Let no worldly Advantage (and indeed you have no Prospect of a vast deal) ever bribe your Conscience. Encourage none either to desert their Principles, or commit an Error in Practice for the sake of Friendship or Interest.

Let

Let not any by their Civilities and Courtship tempt you to return the Complement, by speaking what they would have you, and not what you should; and straining your own Principles to gratify their Worldliness, Ambition and Vice; who after you have thus served their Turn, 'tis likely, will turn their back upon you and totally desert and leave you.

Now to conclude: These are the Things I exhort you to, as being, what I apprehend, of no small Concern in the Success of your Ministry. In all these Particulars therefore, see that you be watchful.

I should here back the Charge and Advices I have given, with proper Motives. I'll but name a few, and need do no more to one, that is so capable as you are of improving them in your private Meditations. To engage your Regards to what I have said,

I might put you in mind of *the Trust*, which God hath this day reposed in you. And that as a Steward you ought to be faithful.

I might remind you of *the strict Account* you are to give to your Lord. And that if any perish through your wilful Negligence and Unfaithfulness, God will require it at your Hands.

I might remind you also of those *Vows and Promises* you have made this day to God, before all these Witnesses, and which you will do well often to revolve and reflect upon.

I might set before you *the sweet and blessed Encouragements*, which your Master hath given to all that prove faithful to him.

I might also display *the Glory of the Reward*, which shall be conferr'd on those, that hold out to the End, with many other Considerations; which, because I have taken up so much of the Time already, I must not so much as mention, but content myself in praying only and beseeching you as a Brother, and (if I thought myself old enough) in charging you as a Father, as you will answer it to God and the Lord Jesus Christ, in the Day of Judgment, that *you be watchful in all things, and that you give full Proof of your Ministry.*

I make an End with an Observation or two, to you my Brethren, who have accepted this worthy Person for your Minister.

1st, It may be observ'd from what has been done this day in your presence, and what has pass'd before; that *we do not rashly send Men into the Ministry*, but require them to have due and competent Qualifications for the Work, and that they be Persons of sober Life. If there be any Blemishes among us, we lament them, and wish a Remedy could be found against them. It is a great Calumny therefore, when People shall represent our Ministers as ignorant Laymen, and of vile Character.

2^{dly}, You may observe from what has been done, *how awful and solemn a Thing it is for a Man to take on him the Office of the Ministry.*

And

3dly, It is easy for you, my Brethren, to infer from hence, *your Duty* to this your Minister. Which is certainly to honour and respect him for his Work sake. To do what in you lies to make his Living among you reputable, easy and comfortable, and to do nothing whilst He is faithfully discharging his Duty, that shall grieve his Spirit, or hinder him in his Work. And finally, to make it your chief Care to remember and observe the Errands, which from Time to Time He shall bring you from the great God. To believe those Truths, which shall be deliver'd by him, and practise those Duties which God by him shall require of you. That you be not forgetful Hearers, but Doers of the Work, and blessed in your Deeds. That you may obtain Salvation, and be the Joy of your Minister, and his Crown of rejoicing in the Day of the Lord Jesus. That this may be the final Issue of all, the Lord in his infinite Mercy give a gracious Answer to the Prayers, that we have, and are going further to put up with you and for you.

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Ms. A. 1. 2

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